SUBJECT No. 30

Discontinuance of the practice of requiring inamdars to take out licenses for removal of fuel.

Mr. N. Surppa, Inamdars' Association, Bangalore.

Summary of Discussion.—The member stated that the raiyats in Government villages are permitted to remove their forest produce without a license which is insisted on in the cases of removal of such produce from inam lands and requested that the restriction on the inamdars may be removed by authorising inamdars themselves to permit removal of the produce under their own passes.

Reply of Government.—The rule cannot be relaxed in the interests of forest growth on Government lands. The question of authorising the inamdars to issue passes and of the supply to them of the necessary license books will be investigated.

SUBJECT No. 31

Permission to inamdars to lease out their forest produce.

Mr. N. Surappa, Inamdars' Association, Bangalore.

Summary of Discussion.—It was explained that prior to the disposal of their forest produce, (tangadi and kakke bark) the inamdars had to obtain a permit from the forest officers who delayed the issue of these permits to the detriment of the inamdars and that consequently it was argued that inamdars should be free to dispose of their produce without reference to the Forest Department.

Reply of Government.—The question of avoiding the hardships by authorising the inamdars to issue passes themselves, or by fixing a time limit within which licenses should be issued by the officers concerned will be investigated.

SUBJECT No. 32

Marking the boundary line of State Forests 165 yards away from cultivated lands.

Messrs. P. Venkappaiya, Shimoga Taluk and Nadig Bhaskara-Rao, Sorab Taluk.

Summary of Discussion.—It was represented that the close proximity of the State Forest boundary line to cultivated lands was highly inconvenient and irksome to the raiyats and their cattle and that therefore the line should be removed to a distance of at least 165 yards from the cultivated fields.

Reply of Government.—The proposal involves heavy expenditure and there is no necessity to alter the present rule which fixes a margin of 110 yards. Individual cases of hardships due to the proximity of boundary lines will be investigated if brought to the notice of Government. The question of removing such boundary lines to a suitable distance from inhabited villages will also receive due consideration.

REVENUE—(EXCISE).

(Nos. 33 to 36.)

SUBJECT No. 33

Appointment of a Committee to introduce Temperance Measures.

Mr. Niligiri G. Sanjeeviah, Kurubara Sangha, Bangalore.

Mr. Niligiri G. Sanjeeviah:—Excise revenue is increasing year by year. This shows that the excise policy of Government is not dry but wet. Shops are being opened after 8 o'clock in the night. This should be put a stop to.

The existing Licensing Board can do nothing in this matter as it has no power at present.

It is necessary that this Board be empowered, as in British India, to enforce the location of shops in suitable localities and keeping the shops open during specified hours.

Dewan.—That is a separate proposition.

Mr. Sanjeeviah:—Committees have been appointed by the Bombay and Madras Governments and it is necessary that a similar committee should be appointed here. This committee should visit all places in the State, study the conditions and see how far it will be possible to reduce consumption.

Dewan.—A committee was appointed in 1917 consisting Messrs. Hosakoppa Krishna Rao, R. Gopalaswami Iyer, Karnick Krishnamurthy Rao, Shankaranarayana Rao, Subbaiya and others.

Mr. Sanjeeviah.—America was wet before the war and it is now dry. Conditions now are quite different from those of 1917.

Dewan.—Government considered the various suggestions made by the members of the committee and found that it was not possible to carry out some of them. I would like to invite the attention of the member to the Government Order, dated 18th April 1917. The report of the committee contains very good suggestions and Government have recently approved of the circular prohibiting the opening of shops, sales, etc.

Mr. S. Venkatesiah.—It is true that the order has been brought into effect but there is no denying the fact that it has, in no way, reduced consumption. So long as the fact remained that signs of temperance were not visible, it was incumbent on all concerned to devise measures to encourage habits of thrift. This requires close study and continuous attention and it is therefore necessary that once in two or three years fresh committee should be organised to go into this question.

Dewan.—Consumption has largely fallen down and consequently revenue also has fallen.

Mr. Venkatesiah.—We can still further reduce consumption. At times this reduction is due to other causes, such as excessive prices, higher bids and shop sales, closing of shops, etc.

Dewan.—What is the work of the Licensing Board? I am sorry to say that the members of the Board have been very indifferent.

Mr. Venkatesiah.—Each district may be given a Licensing Board.

Mr. Usmán Khan.—Boards of this sort only increase troubles. Have we Boards to check robbery, murder and other crimes? Why should we have a Board to check consumption of liquor? The number of shops and the strength of the Police staff that existed during the late Mr. Purnaiya's time may be compared with the number now existing. What is the action the Government takes to quell various disturbances, etc., that take place in the streets? Government should consider all these aspects before they form a committee.

Mr. J. R. Isaac.—I may point out that whenever we go on inspections we have found the residents of the place not willing to have the shops in localities where they now exist, but the Board has no power to do anything in the matter.

Dewan.—Government will note the point and enquire what measures are necessary to help the people in introducing temperance reform.

Mr. R. Gopalaswami Iyer.—I am a member of the Licensing Board. I am of opinion that contractors bid for higher prices, that rates of liquor are being raised and that owing to several other causes the excise revenue is increasing and that it is therefore wrong to say that the revenue has fallen down. In accordance with Government Orders, shops should be kept open from 11 A.M. to 8 P.M.,

but on the other hand, they are kept open even after 8 o'clock, till late in the night. This brings no profit either to the people or to the Government, but only to the shop-keepers. Moreover, it affects the health of labourers and other people resorting to drink at that late hour. Government should therefore see that shops are not kept open at such untimely hours. Cases of the kind brought to the notice of the Police received no attention. To prevent shop-keepers from keeping shops open at late hours, it is desirable that some punishment should be inflicted whenever cirumstances demand it.

Dewan.—We will take note of the suggestions.

SUBJECT No. 34

Revenue from toddy and arrack shops to municipalities.

Mr. D. Srikanta Rao, Devanhalli Municipality.

Mr. Srikanta Rao.—Municipalities are not realising any part of the revenue from toddy and arrack shops situated within the limits of their towns. It is therefore prayed that the municipalities may be authorised to recover 5 per cent of the shop rent or Rs. 120, at least, per annum.

Dewan.—Is it Minor or Town Municipalities that should be so authorised ?

Mr. Srikanta Rao.—All municipalities.

Dewan.—Is it on shop rent that it is proposed to recover percentage ?

Mr. L. Vema Reddi.—A certain percentage should be given to the municipality to induce it to work with interest and introduce measures of sanitation, water-supply, etc. People who congregate in the shops come from infected areas.

Dewan.—Cannot the shops be put outside the city or town limits ?

Mr. Srikanta Rao.—It is not desirable to do so.

Mr. Purushothamanandagiri Gosai.—Shops, if kept outside municipal limits, will be of great use to the people.

Dewan.—The question of extending to other town municipalities, the concession given to Bangalore and Mysore Municipalities of collecting registration and surcharge fees will be referred to the Special Officer for Local Self-Government Scheme for consideration in connection with the question of local finance.

SUBJECT No. 35

Permission to remit excise khists on the 20th of the month.

Messrs. B. Dasappa and P. Achaiya, Kolar Municipality.

Mr. Dasappa.—It is prayed that the 20th of the month may be fixed as the date for the payment of excise khists into the treasury. The present rule is a great hardship to the contractors and it is necessary that this arrangement should be sanctioned at least for the first three months of the year.

Second Member of Council.—Why should the date be 20th of the month and not the 30th ? The reason why 10th was fixed by Government was to take speedy measures for the recovery of the khist lest the time limit might expire. To avoid that contingency and also not to allow arrears to accumulate this date has been fixed. It is not possible to alter the date as prayed for by the member.

Dewan.—Till the arrears which are now very heavy are fully collected, no change in the existing system can be allowed.